
Questioning as we learn: An introduction to critical thinking

Material for Higher Education students in Sierra Leone by INASP, UK



Provided by the Critical Thinking Taskforce (CTTF)
within the project AQHEd-SL

Unit 2 - Snippet 33



Practical activity – Apply your reading skills

Try to apply the SQ4R approach when reading a text. Either your lecturer will have given you a text or select any other subject reading. Follow the SQ4R steps:

Step 1: Survey

As you look at the overall text, what do you notice about the main idea or message and the structure of the text? To find the main idea, scan the headings and graphic information. Is there a kind of introduction which gives an indication of the text's purpose? Make notes.

Step 2: Questions

What questions are going to be answered in the text? Recall that you can make an educated guess about this by turning the headings and subheadings into questions (unless they are already in question form). Write them down and ask yourself what you already know about the questions based on your own knowledge.

Step 3: Read, Record and Recite

What answers are you finding to your questions? Read one paragraph at a time and try to answer the related questions. Look at pictures, graphs and charts, if any.

Write down your own answers as bullet points or short phrases. Note the most interesting facts, definitions and details.

Use your notes to read out loud what you understand from the passage. Use simple language. This will help you to remember what you have read. Repeat reading, recording and reciting until you have finished a whole page.

Step 4: Review

Now go over the page again and repeat what you have read out loud before. Look back at your questions and make sure you can answer them.